

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of implementing and using a federated system, the method comprising:  
defining a plurality of data sources on a node, each data source being associated with a taxonomy;  
establishing a taxonomy view at the node;  
creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view at the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources; and  
accessing the plurality of data sources via the taxonomy view.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein defining a plurality of data sources on a node comprises:  
selecting one or more data resources to be used in each data source;  
specifying one or more connection parameters to each data resource; and  
making available one or more objects from each data resource, the taxonomy of each data source comprising the one or more available data resource objects in the data source.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein each data resource is of a type and at least one of the plurality of data sources comprises data resources of different types.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein a type of data resource is a text file.
5. The method of claim 2, wherein creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view of the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
determining whether each available data resource object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source matches one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node;  
creating at least one new object in the taxonomy view of the node for each available data resource object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source without a matching taxonomy view object; and  
mapping each available data resource object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source to the one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node matching the available data resource object.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein an available data resource object matches a taxonomy view object when the two objects are identical.
7. The method of claim 2, wherein an object is a category, a property, or an attribute.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein establishing a taxonomy view for the node comprises:  
taking a snapshot of the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources defined on the node.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources is different from the taxonomy of at least one other data source.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of data sources defined on the node resides on the node.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the one or more mappings between the taxonomy view of the node and the taxonomy of the at least one data source is created automatically.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein the taxonomy of each data source comprises one or more available objects and the taxonomy view of the node comprises one or more objects.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein each object in the taxonomy view is unique.
14. The method of claim 12, wherein an object is a category, a property, or an attribute.
15. The method of claim 12, wherein creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view of the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
creating one or more mappings between each available object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source and one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node matching the available data source object.
16. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

maintaining one or more lists of one or more aliases for the one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node, wherein at least one of the one or more mappings between the one or more available objects in the taxonomy of the at least one data source and the one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node is created using the one or more lists.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein an available object in the taxonomy of a data source matches an object in the taxonomy view of the node when the two objects are identical.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view of the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources comprises:

determining whether each available object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source matches one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node;

creating at least one new object in the taxonomy view of the node for each available object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source without a matching taxonomy view object; and

mapping each available object in the taxonomy of the at least one data source to the one or more objects in the taxonomy view of the node matching the available data source object.

19. The method of claim 12, further comprising:  
customizing the taxonomy view of the node.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein customizing the taxonomy view of the node comprises:  
modifying a label of at least one of the one or more objects in the taxonomy view.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein customizing the taxonomy view of the node comprises:  
changing hierarchy of the one or more objects in the taxonomy view.

22. The method of claim 1, wherein only a portion of the taxonomy of the at least one data source is available for mapping.

23. The method of claim 1, wherein only a portion of the taxonomy of the at least one data source is mapped to the taxonomy view of the node.

24. The method of claim 1, wherein each data source comprises content and the content of at least one of the plurality of data sources is different from the content of at least one other data source.
25. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
storing at least one of the one or more mappings between the taxonomy view of the node and the taxonomy of the at least one data source on the node.
26. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
establishing one or more other taxonomy views for the node.
27. The method of claim 26, wherein at least one of the one or more other taxonomy views is based on the taxonomy view of the node.
28. The method of claim 26, wherein the one or more other taxonomy views comprise one or more organizational views, one or more role-based views, one or more project views, and/or one or more personal views.
29. The method of claim 1, wherein accessing the plurality of data sources via the taxonomy view comprises:  
querying the plurality of data sources via the taxonomy view.
30. The method of claim 29, wherein only one query is submitted for querying multiple data sources.
31. The method of claim 30, wherein the one query submitted for querying multiple data sources is translated for each data source.
32. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
controlling access to one or more of the plurality of data sources.
33. The method of claim 32, wherein the node controls access to at least one of the one or more data sources.

34. The method of claim 32, wherein one or more other nodes control access to at least one of the one or more data sources.
35. The method of claim 32, wherein controlling access to one or more of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
restricting access to content in the one or more data sources.
36. The method of claim 35, wherein one or more IDs and/or passwords are used to restrict access to the content in the one or more data sources.
37. The method of claim 36, further comprising:  
storing the one or more IDs and/or passwords on the node.
38. The method of claim 32, wherein controlling access to one or more of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
regulating presentation of content from the one or more data sources.
39. The method of claim 38, wherein regulating presentation of content from the one or more data sources comprises:  
establishing one or more modes of presenting the content from the one or more data sources.
40. The method of claim 38, wherein one or more filters and/or business rules are used to regulate the presentation of the content from the one or more data source.
41. The method of claim 40, wherein further comprising:  
storing the one or more filters and/or business rules on the node.
42. The method of claim 32, wherein controlling access to one or more of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
altering content from the one or more data sources.
43. The method of claim 42, wherein altering content from the one or more data sources comprises:

increasing or decreasing one or more values in the content from the one or more data sources.

44. The method of claim 42, wherein altering content from the one or more data sources comprises:

replacing one or more values in the content from the one or more data sources with one or more other values.

45. The method of claim 42, wherein alteration of the content from the one or more data sources depends upon who is seeking access to the content.

46. The method of claim 42, wherein one or more business rules are used to alter the content from the one or more data sources.

47. The method of claim 42, further comprising:  
storing the one or more business rules on the node.

48. The method of claim 32, wherein controlling access to one or more of the plurality of data sources comprises:  
managing how content from the one or more data sources can be used.

49. The method of claim 49, wherein one or more business rules are used to manage how the content from the one or more data sources is used.

50. The method of claim 49, further comprising:  
storing the one or more business rules on the node.

51. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of data sources is part of a network group.

52. The method of claim 51, wherein the at least one network group data source is shared with a plurality of nodes.

53. The method of claim 1, wherein a taxonomy is an organizational structure and/or classification scheme.

54. A computer program product including a computer-readable medium having a sequence of instructions which, when executed by a processor, causes the processor to execute a process for implementing and using a federated system, the process comprising:

- defining a plurality of data sources on a node, each data source being associated with a taxonomy;

- establishing a taxonomy view at the node;

- creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view at the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources; and

- accessing the plurality of data sources via the taxonomy view.

55. A system for implementing and using a federated system, the system comprising:

- means for defining a plurality of data sources on a node, each data source being associated with a taxonomy;

- means for establishing a taxonomy view at the node;

- means for creating one or more mappings between the taxonomy view at the node and the taxonomy of at least one of the plurality of data sources; and

- means for accessing the plurality of data sources via the taxonomy view.